



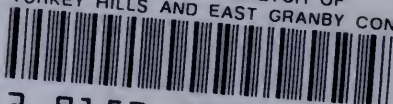
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TURKEY HILLS  
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EAST GRANBY  
CONNECTICUT

by  
ALBERT CARLOS BATES, M. A.

HARTFORD  
1949













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This Sketch was first read before the  
TURKEY HILLS STUDY CLUB  
March 1949

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1949

ONE of the three earliest towns established on the banks of Connecticut River was Windsor. Within a few years its inhabitants had spread out into adjacent territory. Some went in a westerly direction and established themselves in a settlement that was sometimes called "an appendix of Windsor", or by its Indian name of Massaco. This settlement was incorporated in 1670 as the town of Simsbury. Six years later its inhabitants were obliged to flee and the town was burned by the Indians. It was soon resettled and rebuilt; but fear of Indian outbreaks continued for more than half a century. The town grew and prospered and small settlements soon grew up in several parts of the town. In 1786 the northern section of the town was incorporated as the town of Granby, and in 1854 the northern part of Windsor adjacent to Granby was incorporated as Windsor Locks.

The population of Simsbury had so increased and the inhabitants were so dispersed that in 1736 the General Assembly divided the town into several ecclesiastical societies, the section that had sometimes been referred to as "Simsbury north-east corner", comprising nearly one fourth of the town, being established as the Ecclesiastical Society of Turkey Hills. The following year a strip of Windsor adjoining the Society on the east, which from its width was often referred to as "the half mile", was added to the Society by an Act of the Assembly. As thus established the Society was, loosely speaking, a parallelogram with its long axis running north-north-east by south-south-west, its sides parallel and varying from three to three and a half miles apart, its length on the west four and a half miles and on the east five and a half miles. It was bounded north on Suffield, east on Suffield and Windsor, partly on each, south on the Farmington River, which ran a southeasterly course, on the other side of which was that part of Windsor which is now

Bloomfield and that part of Granby which is now the Village of Tariffville. The south-west corner was a little to the west of the point where the river makes a sharp "U" turn from north to south and west by Salmon Brook Ecclesiastical Society in Granby.

In June 1858 the town of East Granby was incorporated with practically the same bounds as Turkey Hills Society, except that on the east side the line was carried to the east to include an additional mile of Windsor Locks.

The town is divided a little east of the center and nearly in line with its long axis by a range of high hills known as Talcott Mountain. The westerly side of the mountain is partly cliffs and loose fragments of trap rock. On either side of the mountain is good farm land. There were at first numerous marshes; but most of these have dried or been drained. The only notable ones now are on the west side of the mountain, one just south of the "Vinyard Notch". Here a few years ago piles were driven down eighty feet without finding the bottom. The other near the Hatchet Hill road is a small pond, I think without inlet or outlet, known as Pond Marsh or Marsh Pond, still surrounded by a soft swamp or marsh. In early days there were two marshes within a half mile south of the center, the Richards Marsh and Half Moon Marsh. Near the west border of the town was "the great marsh". It seems probable that some open meadows and other lands that could be easily cleared for cultivation were the attraction that caused the earliest inhabitants to settle at Turkey Hills. There was oak timber and large chestnut trees on the mountain and perhaps in other places and hickory which was much used for firewood, also some curly maple and large cherry trees that were fashioned into furniture, and doubtless there were the other species of trees usually found in this region. Some of the oak was used for shipbuilding in the nearby streams and much chestnut was sawed into the wide boards that may still occasionally be seen on some old buildings. The evergreen species appear to have been confined to the more sandy soil of the east and west borders of the town. On the east there was a growth of yellow pine, the stumps of some of the old trees, filled with hardened pitch, remaining until within the



memory of the writer. On the west the pines, from which tar was made at an early date, probably extended into Turkey Hills, although the most of the growth was doubtless further to the west. The town now is almost wholly devoted to farming, dairying and some poultry raising. The principal crop raised is tobacco.

When the settlers came the fauna and wild life was abundant here. Even if certain species cannot be definitely located within the settlement, the fact that they are known to have been scattered through the state and particularly if they are known to have been in nearby towns, makes it reasonably probable that they were to be found here. The fiercest and probably the most dreaded animals were the panther or catamount and the timber wolf, both of which appear to have been fairly common. Wolves are known to have been found in Farmington, Hartford and Windsor. So late as 1767 a panther one night killed several sheep of a flock in Windsor. Their owner followed the animal's trail for half a mile and found and killed it. Allied to the panther family was the lynx which appears to have existed in the state well into the last century. A lesser animal of the same nature, the wildcat, is still occasionally killed in this region. Black bears were not uncommon in this region; but apparently were not feared and were easily disposed of. Early in the 1700s the bounty given by the Colony for the destruction of wolves and "panthers or catamounts" was raised to forty shillings with half that amount for their whelps, and forty shillings was quite a goodly sum in those days. There was likewise a bounty on lynx and, if I am not mistaken, also on bears and wildcats. A moose or an elk may have occasionally wandered as far south and east as here, although no record of such a visitation has been found. The writer once found a portion of an elk antler in an Indian shelter in the western part of the state. Deer were found here and were probably plentiful in the early days. This is evidenced by the use and sale of deerskins, by the finding of implements believed to have been made from their bones and of parts of their skulls in Indian shell mounds and Indian shelters in different parts of the state. Two pairs of deer antlers, presumed to be local, are still preserved in nearby towns. There is one walled, and

presumably originally further fenced, enclosure in this town where a former resident kept one or more deer. The largest of the fur bearing animals was the otter, now perhaps extinct about here. The writer once saw one near the center of the town on the bank of the creamery brook, or "the trout brook", as it was called in the early days. Another was the beaver which was found as near as Wethersfield; but the writer knows of no traces of it in this town. Beaver appeared in a Connecticut town about forty miles from here some twenty years ago. After, shall we say, a residence there of several years, they disappeared as suddenly as they had come. Once since then beaver have been reported in the state, possibly the same migrant family. The red and perhaps the gray fox are still found in this vicinity in spite of being constantly hunted for more than two centuries. There were also the mink, muskrat, skunk and raccoon, most or all of which are still found about here. The grey rabbit, or more properly hare, still exists; but the white rabbit which was twice its size, has gone. One of the oldest inhabitants told me many years ago that he could remember when they were still found here. An opossum was killed in the town some seventy-five years ago and another within the past year. The turkey was the finest and largest game bird, and from the name given to the Ecclesiastical Society, we may assume that they were once common here. A Frenchman who spent some months in Hartford published a book after his return home, in which he gives an account of a turkey hunt in this vicinity in the autumn of 1784. After driving some distance, he spent the night with the family of a farmer with whom he was apparently acquainted. A tradition says this was towards Farmington. The following morning they started out early and after walking some distance came to the hunting ground. Proceeding carefully, they after a time came upon some turkeys. The Frenchman shot a fine bird which he took back to Hartford and himself prepared and cooked and ate with some invited friends. There is nothing to prove that this hunt took place at Turkey Hills, but at so late a date as this, there could not have been many places so near to Hartford where turkeys were still to be found and it seems not unreasonable to believe that this

hunt took place on our own local mountain. In early days wild pigeons were very numerous, particularly during their migrating periods. They were taken in large numbers in nets and by other methods. The writer recalls seeing in a nearby town a place prepared for their netting with "stool-pigeons" fastened there to attract the attention and lure passing birds. The species is now extinct and even stuffed specimens are rare. They were a large strong bird, much larger than our common doves or pigeons. One of their favorite foods was acorns, which they swallowed whole, shuck and all. The writer is probably the only person present who has seen these birds alive, and almost certainly is the only person here who has ever eaten them. Shad were plentiful in the Farmington River and occasional mention is found of salmon, although it seems improbable that these fish were as numerous as has been stated by some writers. The name Salmon Brook as one of its tributaries would seem to be a sure indication that these fish ascended the Farmington River. Lamprey eels were common. They used to suck on at "eel rock", where the dam and power house now are, presumably for a rest before attempting to go up the rapids, and many were taken there by means of a special hook attached to a pole.

The finding at one time or another on nearly every farm in the town of stone weapons, implements or chippings made by the Indians, indicates a widespread and long continued occupancy by them. Yet there is no indication of any permanent tribal settlement here by them. They were probably families or small roving bands bent on hunting and who would camp or live for short periods in convenient localities. The early historians are now believed to have been in error in their estimates of large numbers of Indians dwelling in New England. On the whole, the local Indians were reasonably friendly to the white settlers. The nearest settled tribe was the Massacos of Simsbury. In general it was the Indians who came down from Canada, incited perhaps by the French, who pillaged, murdered and carried off captives. A brick building near the north end of East Granby street, whose ruins the writer remembers, was probably built for a residence; but in latter years it was called "the



old fort", and was said to be the place to which the inhabitants fled for safety in case of an alarm. The Minutes of the Council of War record say that on July 4, 1724, nine men were sent to garrison at Turkey Hills. Six of these were relieved on August 13 and the other three remained until August 22nd. Garrisons were sent to other places at about the same time. If I am not mistaken, there was another alarm and garrisoning about 1732; but record of it has now escaped me. A rather improbable story is told of the Indians besieging a house in the town one night and trying to enter it; but were driven away by a shot fired at them through the crack between the logs of the house. This seems the more improbable from the present belief that the settlers did not build any log houses. A more probable story is of a man living north of the center who was hoeing corn and when near the end of a row saw an Indian hiding in the bushes just ahead of him. He continued to the end of the row, then turned and hoed back on the next row. On reaching the end of that row, he dropped his hoe and ran for his not far distant house — doubtless to sound an alarm. There is little now except the stone artifacts to remind us of this native population. A few Indian place names remain in the vicinity. Hatchet Hill is a reminder, as the Indian who claimed to own it is said to have sold it for a hatchet. "Wigwam bars" on the south side of the highway going over the mountain, are said to be near the former residence of an Indian family. The last Indian residents of the town were a man and his wife who lived in the extreme eastern part in a locality which they called "Metukal". She, Phebe, survived her husband for some years and probably died in the late 1820s. She is remembered through a long poem about her written by a fellow townsman, Matthew Griswold.

The land on Turkey Hills street was divided into a number of lots running west one half mile or more from Suffield bounds and varying in width from 30 to 50 rods. These lots were granted to sundry persons in May 1687 and their title was to be confirmed upon application to the town within six months. The conditions of the grants were that the grantees should reside in the town for seven years, the inference being, although it is not so stated, that the residence

should be upon the granted lot, and that the grantees should agree to contribute to the maintenance of the Reverend Edward Thompson. Mr. Thompson had come to Simsbury that year with the expectation of becoming the settled minister there. As a part of the expected settlement one of the Turkey Hills lots, a portion of which still continues in the Thompson family, was given to him. Although he continued to preach in Simsbury until 1691, he apparently was never formally "settled" there. Meanwhile no settlement appears to have been made on the Turkey Hills lots, the bounds of most of them were lost and the title to them was considered doubtful, perhaps because of Mr. Thompson's failure to "settle" in Simsbury. In February 1693, because of non-performance of the conditions under which the grants had been made, the grants of these lots were annulled by the town; but Arthur Henbury, the grantee of one of these lots, probably the present Gay farm, refused to recognize the annulment and brought suit in the Hartford County Court to sustain his right to the land. The case being decided against him, he appealed it to the Particular Court, whereupon the town early in 1694 appointed John Higley as its attorney to fight the case. Being again defeated, he appealed once more, this time to the General Court or Assembly. Here in May 1694 he was successful, although the town claimed that he had never asked for a confirmation of his grant, that he did not sign the agreement for Mr. Thompson's maintenance and that his appeal to the General Court was not made in the proper manner. Following the decision, the selectmen issued a caution on May 31st 1694 to the recorder against entering a record of the land to Henbury. He died not long after and in 1699 his executor was given authority to sell enough of the land to pay his debts.

According to an historian of a century ago "at the same time or shortly afterwards" the lots covered by the grants that had been annulled were newly granted to sundry persons including a number of the former grantees. Be this as it may, it is believed that settlement of that section did not begin until about 1700, and the present writer inclines to the belief that it may have been several years after that date. The bounds of the lots were not actually defined until a

survey of them was made in March 1715/16 by John Slater the town clerk and surveyor. The actual bounds of only two of the lots were then known; but from these he was able to establish the bounds of the others. It was found that each of the so-called fifty rod lots was actually fifty-three rods twelve feet and four inches in width and the narrower lots proportionately wider. The early surveyors did not give too much attention to accuracy in making their measurements and were apt to understate their measurements. As the record in one nearby town reads, they allowed "for swag of chain".

Beginning at the north end of the street, the lots were assigned as follows and apparently were surveyed one mile in length. The use of the word "alias" together with a second name at two of the lots would seem to indicate that they had been sold previous to the survey.

John Drake and Thomas Parsons 43-0-2

John Lewis of Windsor 43-0-2. In first grant, this was called first lot and laid out to Humphry Prior.

Peter Buel 53-12-4

John Williams 43-0-2

Thomas Barber alias Jonathan Higley 53-12-4

Andrew Hillyer alias Jonathan Humphries 53-12-4

Richards of Hartford 43-0-2

Timothy Phelps 53-12-4

William and Benjamin Moore 53-12-4

Jonathan Moore 43-0-2

Joseph Phelps 53-12-4

Samuel Phelps 53-12-4

John Holcomb 53-12-4

Joseph Barnard 40-0-2

Isaac Owen 32-4-6

John Owen 53-12-4

John Higley 53-12-4

Stephen Winchel 53-12-4

Ebenezer Hurlbut 43-0-2

In 1698 Jonathan Higley received a renewal of his former grant "by Mr. Tompsons land." It is difficult to account for this renewal of a grant to Jonathan Higley, who died in 1716, of land "by Mr. Thompson's land". A possible ex-



planation is that the land lay just west of Thompson's number nineteen lot comprising the second mile, sometimes referred to as the second tier of lots, so that its east end would abut on the west end of Thompson's lot. Jonathan's brother, Samuel, resided in just about that locality in the first quarter of the 1700s.

John Holcomb is said to have been the earliest settler in this section, and tradition says that he came out into this uninhabited region with only a pair of oxen and an axe and that the only metal he had were the head of his axe and the staple and ring of his ox yoke. If this be true, he would seem to have no fear of either Indians or wild animals. The story seems a bit fantastic.

Further notes on the distribution and early sales of these lots are as follows. They are chiefly extracted from volumes of the land records of Simsbury. In the distribution of 1688 the lots were numbered, beginning with number one at the north end. When the 1716 survey was made, there was one lot next north of lot one of the 1688 distribution; so that the second lot in the 1716 survey corresponds to lot one of the 1688 distribution. In the notes which follow the original 1688 numbering has been retained.

LOT 1. Granted to Humphrey Prior May 1688. Surveyed to John Lewis March 1715/16. April 20, 1714, Humphrey Prior gives to "my true and loving friend mary dible late Wife of Thomas dible Deceased" land granted him by the town, 40 rods in breadth, bounded north by Thomas Parsons lot, south by Sergnt Peter Buel, containing 80 acres. Jan. 8, 1714/15 "Mary Prior late Mary Dible of windsor" sells to John Lewis of Windsor "land given me by Humphrey Prior now my husband before our marriage" for 16 pounds. Feb. 8, 1718, John Lewis of Windsor mortgages to Capt. Timothy Phelps of Windsor for 6 pounds "the south half of the land I bought of Mary Prior containing 40 Acres bounded north on remaining half which I sold to Nathaniel Phelps bounded south on land of Serg. Peter Buel. Oct. 28, 1715, John Lewis of Windsor sells to Nathaniel Phelps of Northampton, Mass., 40 acres of land in Turkey Hills bounded north by a lot that was Thomas Parsons south by land of my own.

Lot 2. Granted to Peter Buel May 1688 and surveyed to him March 1715/16.

Lot 3. Granted to John Williams May 1688 and surveyed to him March 1715/16. Sept. 12, 1716, Ebenezer Williams of Simsbury sells to Samuel Beman of Windsor "the remainder of the 3d lot at Turkey Hills bounded north on Peter Buel bounded south on Thomas Barber 40 rods in breadth after 30 acres is taken out which my honored father John Williams mortgaged to Mrs. Mary Gilbert & quit-claims the 30 acres if Beman wishes to purchase it.

Lot 4. Granted to Thomas Barber May 1688 and surveyed to Thomas Barber alias Jonathan Higley March 1715/16. Dec. 26, 1715, Andrew and Sarah Robe sell to Jonathan Higley their interest in the 4th lot "laid out to my father in law Thomas Barber decd. the lot estimated at 100 acres". The whole lot inventoried at 20 pounds their share was 2 pounds 17 shillings 4 pence and the widows thirds to come out of that. Dec. 26, 1715, Samuel Barber sells his interest in the same land "which was laid out to my father Thomas Barber being 4 pounds 4 shillings and widows thirds to be taken out of that". March 17, 1715/16, the lot was surveyed to Jonathan Higley.

Lot 5. Granted to Andrew Hillyer May 1688 and surveyed to Andrew Hillyer alias Jonathan Humphries March 1715/16. Inventory of estate of Andrew Hillyer who died Jan. 22, 1697/8 "Land next stony Brooke at North east corner 12 pounds". It was surveyed to Jonathan Humphries March 1715/16.

Lot 6. Granted to Arthur Henbury May 1688. Surveyed to Richards of Hartford March 1715/16.

Lot 7. Laid out to Lieut. Terry May 1688. Surveyed to Timothy Phelps March 1715/16. April 17, 1718, Timothy Phelps mortgages to John Crass (Case) in trust for John Allen "the south half of the lot I now live on, whole lot 50 rods in breadth bounded north on lot that was Henburys bounded south on land of William Moore". Timothy Phelps was living at Turkey Hills Sept. 16, 1712.

Lot 8. Laid out to Nicholas Gozard in 1688. Surveyed to William and Benjamin Moore March 1715/16. William Moore was living at Turkey Hills Sept. 16, 1712. April 1, 1712



Nathan Gozard sells to Ebenezer Hurlburt of Windsor the north half of the eighth lot which came to him from his father's estate; "the whole lot is bounded north by Lieut. Terrys lot alias Timothy Phelps his lot bounded south by John Pettibone Sr lot alias Jonathan Moore his lot". May 16, 1715, Ebenezer Hurlburt of Simsbury exchanges with William Moore of Simsbury "the north half of lot formerly belonging to Nicholas Gozard decd which I bought of Nathan Gozard 25 rods wide bounded north on Timothy Phelps bounded south on Andrew Moore of Windsor". March 29, 1715, Andrew Moore of Windsor gives to his son Benjamin 50 acres 25 rods in breadth at Turkey Hills "bounded north on my son William bounded south on my son Jonathan".

Lot 9. Granted to John Pettibone Sr. May 1688, 40 rods in breadth. Surveyed to Jonathan Moore March 1715/16. Sept. 16, 1712 Jonathan Moore was living at Turkey Hills. Feb. 4, 1713/14 Jonathan Moore mortgages to Capt. Timothy Thrall of Windsor 30 rods broad at Turkey Hills bounded north on my own land bounded south on John Case. March 30, 1715 Jonathan Moore mortgages to Capt. Timothy Thrall at Turkey Hills 42 ½ rods bounded north on Benjamin Moore bounded south on John Case and was formerly Gozards.

Lot 10. Granted to John Case Sr. May 1688. Surveyed to Joseph Phelps March 1715/16. Feb. 8, 1714, John Sam<sup>ll</sup> Rich<sup>d</sup>, Bartho Case, John Tullor, James Hilliar, Jonah Westover, Joseph Phelps, Mary Hilliar wife of James above, sell to Joseph Phelps Jr. our interest in land which fell to us from our father John Case "given to him by the Inhabitants of Simsbury at north east corner 50 rods in breadth bounded north on land formerly of John Pettibone Sr. bounded south on land given to Luke Hill Sr". March 19, 1716, Joseph Case, Abigal Westover and Mary Hillyer sell to Joseph Phelps Jr. "our interest in land at north east corner which came from our father John Case 50 rods breadth". Dec. 24, 1718, Joseph Phelps Jr. and the legatees of William Case decd agree that the legatees shal have 1/10 of the land at Turkey Hills which came to them by their grandfather John "being on The North side of the lot a strip". Signed by Joseph Phelps and William Moore.

LOT 11. Granted to Luke Hill May 1688. Surveyed to Samuel Phelps March 1715/16. Nov. 17, 1716, Samuel Phelps Jr. mortgages to Capt. Timothy Thrall land at Turkey Hills 25 rods in breadth bounded north on John Case heirs bounded south on Tahan Hills heirs. Nov. 15, 1716 Josiah Phelps Jr. gives to his son Samuel Phelps "now living at Turkey Hills land at Turkey Hills which I purchased of Luke Hill of Haddam being one half of land granted by the town to Luke Hill Sr. and is left undivided between the heirs of Tahan hill who claims the other half whole lot bounded north on John Case heirs bounded south on John Holcomb. May 6, 1714, Luke Hill of Haddam sells to Josiah Phelps Sr. "land granted my father Luke hill and given by my father to Tahan Hill and self and is undivided between heirs of my brother Tahan hill and self whole lot bounded north on John Case heirs bounded south on John Holcomb.

LOT 12. Granted to Nathaniel Holcomb May 1688. Surveyed to John Holcomb March 1715/16.

LOT 13. Granted to Joshua Holcomb May 1688. March 14, 1694/5, Distribution of Joshua Holcomb's estate "by 40<sup>ty</sup> acres of Land on the east the mountain" to son Joshua. Survey of March 1715/16 this lot to Joseph Barnard.

LOT 14. Granted to Ephraim Haward May 1688. Barnard Bartlet was living at Turkey Hills Sept. 16, 1712. Feb. 25, 1714 Barnard Bartlet sells to Isaac Owen 30 rods broad at Turkey Hills bounded north by Joseph Barnard bounded south by land formerly Josiah Owen's now John Owen and Samuel Clark Jr. Surveyed to Isaac Owen March 1715/16.

LOT 15. Granted to William Smith May 1688. Surveyed to John Owen March 1715/16.

LOT 16. Granted to John Higley May 1688 and surveyed to him March 1715/16.

LOT 17. Granted to Sergt. Willcockson in May 1688 and surveyed to Stephen Winchel March 1715/16.

LOT 18. Granted to Joseph Owen May 1688. May 16, 1715 William Moore exchanged with Ebenezer Hurlbut 40 acres of land at Turkey Hills "which I bought of Joseph Owen bounded north on Stephen Winchel bounded west on my own land bounded south on land formerly Thompson".

This was the Reverend Edward Thompson to whom land was given by the town in anticipation of his settlement in Simsbury. Surveyed to Ebenezer Hurlbut March 1715/16.

LOT 19. Granted to Edward Thompson May 1688.

LOT 20. Granted to John Case Jr. May 1688.

LOT 21. Granted to John Drake May 1688.

LOT 22. Granted to Daniel Adams May 1688. July 29, 1713 Will of Daniel Adams gives to his son Benjamin "on moiety of one of my hundred acres lotts in the north East corner of Simsbury Township" and to his son Joseph "the other half of that hundred acre lot that is situate in Said north east corner".

LOT 23. Granted to John Saxton May 1688. June 2, 1714, John Saxton Sr. sells to Joseph Phelps Jr. "son of Joseph Phelps who is Capt. Timothy Phelps son and Stephen Palmor both of Windsor land at Turkey Hills 50 rods broad bounded north on heirs of Daniel Adams Sr. bounded south on land formerly granted to Mr. Edward Thompson". It would appear that Mr. Thompson received two grants of land on Turkey Hills street; lot number 19 and another grant south of lot 23.

The first appearance of a resident of this section as an elected official of Simsbury is on December 13, 1711, when at the annual town meeting Barnard Bartlet was chosen hayward and pound keeper for "Turky Hil Squadron". An hayward was an official whose duty it was to care for the fences, presumably those enclosing common fields, and his duties are difficult to distinguish from those of the fence viewer. The pound keeper gathered in stray domestic animals and kept them until they were called for and any damage that they had done was paid for.

The election of town officials representing the Turkey Hills section would appear to have been done only occasionally rather than annually; but it may be that there were elections annually for the sections that were not so specified on the town records. Perhaps the names of these early officials with the offices that they held would be of interest. The election of hayward and pound keeper of Barnard Bartlet in 1711 was followed by that of Stephen Winchel in 1712, of Thomas Winchel in 1720, of Joseph Phelps, Jr., in



1721, of Isaac Owen in 1722, of John Holcomb in 1723, and at the same time liberty was given to build a pound, of John Holcomb again in 1725, of Samuel Strickland in 1728 and of Robert Winchel in 1729.

The fence viewers of common and particular fields for Salmon Brook and for Turkey Hills as there may be occasion were John Matson and Nathaniel Holcomb, both of whom probably lived in Salmon Brook, for 1712, John Owen and John Holcomb in 1714, Benjamin Adams and Andrew Moore in 1715, Joseph Phelps, Jr., and William Moore in 1721 and 1722, Samuel Forward and John Lewis in 1723, Samuel Clark and John Holcomb in 1724, Samuel Forward, Jr., in 1726, William Moore and Thomas Winchel in 1727, Samuel Clark in 1729 and Isaac Owen, Jr., and Caleb Winchel in 1730.

Surveyors of highways were Samuel Forward in 1720, Samuel Clark in 1721 and 1722, Joseph Phelps, Jr., in 1723 and 1724, William Moore in 1725 and to continue south to the river, Ebenezer Hurlburt in 1726 and Samuel Clark and Samuel Forward, Jr., in 1730.

Upon the petition of Stephen Winchel, Jonathan Moore, Timothy Phelps, William Moore and Barnard Bartlet, who were doubtless acting for all, dated September 16, 1712, "the Inhabitants of the Noreast part of the township of Simsbury", they were freed from town rates for the next two years. The reasons named in the petition were: "the difficulties that attend a new place; it being an out exposed to many difficulties, as enemies; remote from meeting and mill and the controversy attending the place about the fee simple of land". They were also freed from paying the ministerial rates for a year and later from the town rates for an additional year.

The town, in January 1719/20, agreed to give the land proprietors quitclaim deeds to their lands, provided they would in turn give quitclaims to the town of the highways that had been or might later be laid out. This action appears to have settled the matter of title to the lands already laid out. In January 1723 John Owen was named as a committee to survey land according to town grants. This presumably

referred to land granted later than that in the first division of lots.

The last day of December 1722 the town voted that Turkey Hills people should have liberty of a burial place to bury their dead, and a portion of what is said to have been John Owen's sheep pasture was appropriated for the purpose. The earliest stone standing in the old cemetery records the death of Timothy son of Timothy and Rachel Phelps on May 13, 1737. In some early burials the body was apparently laid with the head towards the northwest, the reason being, it is said, that at the last trump the deceased might rise facing the morning sun. In the early days coffins were probably carried on hand biers; beginning in 1821 this community owned a hearse which they continued to use probably until the 1850s. It was kept in a hearse-house located in or near the cemetery. This was a small wooden building with an arched doorway and wide double doors at one end and without windows.

The town of Simsbury granted a highway in January 1719/20 east of the mountain "as near the mountains as may be", to be three rods wide and to run from near Sergeant Benjamin Adams' house southerly to the road going from Weatogue to Hartford. This must have been the road that comes by way of Hatchet Hill and goes by way of Rainbow and Windsor. If the road from Weatogue to Hartford was the one designated above and if Adams' house was located on the lot that he owned, which was number twenty-three and well south of the center, the distance between the two points was short, probably not much more than half a mile. It is possible that Adams was residing elsewhere at this time.

Just ten years later, in order that travel might be better directed to pass and repass at what is now the center of the town, the highway between the land of Samuel Clark and that of Isaac Owen, formerly John Owen's, was increased in width to four rods. This was done by setting back the front line of Clark's land two rods, beginning at the corner of the road going west over the mountain. Going southerly to the corner of Clark's lot this would bring the increased width to a point about opposite to where the highway runs easterly

towards Rainbow and Windsor. Why the increase of two rods in width to a three rod highway would make one of only four rods, the writer is unable to explain.

On January 5, 1724/5, the town voted that money remaining from the halfpenny rate laid the previous year for payment of the town debts should be laid out by the different squadrons "to instruct Children in Reading and in wrighting". If a chest of tax lists and other early Simsbury records that were considered of no value had not been disposed of, presumably for paper stock, a century or more ago, it might have been possible to estimate the amount of benefit derived by the children from this educational grant.

The inhabitants of Turkey Hills were given permission by the General Assembly in May 1727 "to procure and maintain the preaching of the gospel" among themselves during the months of November to April in each year, and were freed from paying their portion of the town minister's rate during that period. At the same session a committee was appointed to divide the town into two societies; and upon the report of that committee the following October the town was so divided, Turkey Hills naturally being included in the North or Granby Society. This action, however, did not give satisfaction, and after sundry "memorials" the Assembly in May 1732 annulled this division into two societies and directed that all the inhabitants of the town should attend worship at the old meeting house or Simsbury; but continuing the privilege to Turkey Hills inhabitants to maintain their own preaching during the same winter months.

The town on January 29, 1729/30 "voted that Turkey hills Inhabitants their proportion of the ministers Rate shall be paid to their own hired minister m<sup>r</sup> Collins". He was their minister in 1729 and it seems not unreasonable to suppose that he had served them from the time they were first given winter privileges in November 1727. Mr. Collins was probably the son and namesake of Reverend Nathaniel Collins, the first minister of Enfield.

Upon the petition of a number of persons, the town in March 1733 granted liberty to "the Inhabitants of Turkey Hills with the adjacent neighbors" to become a separate



society. This permission was of course subject to a future act of the Assembly; but they must have felt that they were now on their way to becoming a separate entity. Apparently it was not until three years later, in May 1736, that petition was made to the Assembly to be made a separate society, and at the next session, the following October, the petition was granted and Turkey Hills established as a separate ecclesiastical society or parish. Upon the petition of the inhabitants of the tier of lots in Windsor next east of Simsbury in May 1737, that section was annexed to Turkey Hills society. Its bounds were, north on Suffield, east on Windsor common land, south on the Farmington River and west on Turkey Hills society in Simsbury. The Windsor men who petitioned "praying that they and all other inhabitants on the tier" might be annexed to Turkey Hills were Joseph Phelps 2nd, Josiah Phelps 4th, Elijah Owen, Samuel Owen, John Thrall, Isaac Gillet, Robert Winchel and Ebenezer Hurlburt. The first meeting of the society was not held until the following June, 1737, and the church was probably organized during the same year. The meeting house is said to have been built the following year.

A sketch of the society and church was printed in 1930. To the data it contains may be added the fact that the first church bell was raised April 22, 1831, and it was first struck by Joel Clark and first tolled a few days later for the death of a child of Jesse Clark. The early records of the society, the earliest existing records of the church and the records of the Second School Society of Granby, which had the same boundaries as Turkey Hills, have also been printed, so that it seems unnecessary to give any further account of either the church or society at this time.

Almost before there was any permanent settlement, some adventurous persons had come to Turkey Hills and established an industry there. Phelps' History of Simsbury states that about 1710 iron was manufactured from bog ore found in Turkey Hills and the vicinity. This bog ore, as it was called, was taken from wet boggy marshes and shallow ponds. It was of several varieties, sometimes in loose formation; but more often in somewhat compact masses and sometimes in solid rocklike beds. It usually occurred at from two

to twenty feet below the surface of the stagnant water in which it was found. Even its most solid masses were of a very porous nature. Its formation is supposed to be due to the action of some organism, and after its removal it will renew itself in the same marsh in perhaps twenty years. Before 1728, says the History, a furnace called the "New Works" had been erected on the east street. This was kept going for many years and furnished the principal supply of iron for that section. A map of Simsbury, believed to have been made about 1730, shows the location of the "Iron Works" about where a stream crosses the highway. On this map the location appears to be practically on the boundary line between Simsbury and Suffield. Since that time the line has been several times resurveyed and has been moved. As it now runs, the location of the furnace, which is marked by pieces of slag, is some three to five rods on the Suffield side of the line. Mr. Clark's History of East Granby states that the "New Works" was a furnace located on the farm owned (at the time he wrote) by Oliver M. Holcomb, that the work of producing iron was carried on for a considerable time and that most of the ore came from a section of Windsor known as Ore Marsh. This farm is at the south-east of the highway four corners, about one half mile east of East Granby center. The present writer has been told that a barren spot is still to be seen on this farm, which probably marks the location of this furnace. Apparently Phelps in his History confused the "Iron Works" located near the Suffield boundary and the "New Works" located on the (one time) Holcomb farm. It is not reasonable to suppose that a large and costly furnace for smelting was erected at either locality. The cost of such an one would have been prohibitive and ruins of it would certainly remain. What was probably built was a small furnace in which a small quantity of ore could be heated at a time and then, while it was still hot, freed from its impurities by hammering. This method, it is understood, was frequently used in the early days, even individually by blacksmiths. There is a fall in the stream at the "Iron Works" location sufficient to furnish any power that might have been needed. Seventy-five years ago or a



little less, a Mr. Vadakin had a sawmill at this location. Only abandoned ruins remain there now.

Samuel Higley, a son of John Higley, who was the grantee of one of the lots on Turkey Hills street, was a licensed practicing physician in Simsbury. He had received a good education for that period and appears to have been a man of ability and resourcefulness. His home during his later years, was on the west side of the mountain not far from the swamp that is near the Vinyard Notch. In May 1728 Samuel Higley and Joseph Dewey of Hebron, who had a one third partnership interest with Higley, presented a memorial to the General Assembly in which they stated that Higley "hath found out and obtained a curious art by which to convert, change and transmute, common iron into good steel sufficient for any use, and that he was the very first that ever performed such an operation in America". They asked for and were granted a license giving them the exclusive right to manufacture steel in the Colony during the next ten years, provided they perfected and improved the art to "reasonable perfection" during the next two years. Unfortunately, there is no information to be found as to the success of this undertaking; but it seems reasonable to believe that the Assembly would not have granted such a license unless there was good reason to think the memorialists would carry on and perfect their "art". The fact that no similar license was granted until ten years later and after the death of Higley, would seem to indicate that they had carried on successfully.

A few rods from Samuel's house was a ledge which was found to contain copper ore, and this he proceeded to mine. There is one large shaft that, after the accumulated debris of two centuries, still has a depth of perhaps ten feet. Another shaft had been started near this one, and there was probably some drift mining in one side of the ledge. There is only tradition on which to rely as to the extent of his mining work, and the same is true as to the manner, place or time of his death. Until a few years ago, there was a pile of stones by the side of the highway about a mile south of his home that were very different from any other stone in this region. They were pieces from the size of a person's head to perhaps

half of that size. They had rather square and sharp edges as if they had been broken or blasted from ledges; their color on the outside was almost black with a coarse granular surface. When freshly broken the color was a very dull yellowish. The stone was very hard and heavy. This pile was obliterated a few years ago when a railroad was put through at that spot. The tradition is that these stones were a load of ore from the Higley mine that was being hauled away to be shipped abroad for smelting, that at this point the cart carrying the load broke down and the ore was piled beside the highway fence and never removed. Further tradition has it that Doctor Higley sailed for Europe in a vessel loaded with ore from his mine which was being shipped for smelting, that the vessel foundered during a storm in the English channel, some say in 1735, and that Higley was lost with the vessel. This tradition does not coincide with one apparent piece of evidence that will be noted later. Higley made his will in January 1733/4 and his estate was probated in June 1737. Doubtless relying on this date the author of the Higley Genealogy says he probably died about May 1737. If he had been buried in either Turkey Hills or Simsbury, it would seem reasonable to believe that the family of a man of his at least local prominence and who left a fair estate, would have placed a headstone at his grave; but to such stone exists.

Even if he could not do smelting on a large or commercial scale, Doctor Higley was able to smelt and obtain the pure copper from small quantities of his ore and from this he struck what are known as the "Higley coppers", said to be the first copper coinage in America. They are about the size of our early copper cents, and are now very rare and much sought after by those collectors who can afford to purchase them.

These coppers are thus described in a recent coin catalogue: Figure of a deer standing, "Value of three pence", (Reverse) Three hammers crowned, "Connecticut"; Figure of a deer standing, "The value of three pence", (Reverse) "I am good copper 1737"; Figure of a deer standing, "Value me as you please III", (Reverse) Three broad axes, "I cut my way through"; Figure of a deer standing, "Value me as

you please", (Reverse) One large broad axe. No motto. Although they are not dated, this and the preceding issue are for some unknown reason credited to 1739; Figure of a wheel, "The wheel goes round", (Reverse) Three broad axes, "I cut my way through". It will be noted that one of these issues is credited to 1739 and another is dated 1737. The former could not have been struck by Doctor Samuel, not could the latter if he was lost at sea perhaps in 1735. It is believed that a brother may have continued the coinage for a time after Samuel's death. If Samuel perished in the English channel in 1735 certain proof of his death might not have reached his widow until 1737. It is an interesting fact that the first making of steel in this country and the earliest copper coinage in the country were both by the same man on the same ground in our town of East Granby. Surely that is a distinction for the town.

As the Histories of Simsbury by Noah A. Phelps and Dr. Lucius I. Barber and the History of Newgate by Richard H. Phelps give the story of Newgate Prison and of copper mining there, little remains to be said on these subjects except to give some few additional details and items of general interest relating to them. Copper appears to have been discovered in that section in 1705. The mines were considered to be town property in which each proprietor or inhabitant of Simsbury had a right. There was much controversy and wrangling among the people over the working of the mines. The privilege of working them was leased out at various times to sundry persons and companies during the next sixty years. A number of exploratory pits and diggings were made to the north of the Newgate site and nearer the mountain. In perhaps the deepest of these pits an insane man was later confined, as there were no asylums for such persons in those days. All efforts were finally concentrated on the Newgate site where two shafts were dug, underground passages made and considerable ore extracted. Some of this was smelted in another part of the town; but it is said to have been found to be very refractory and the work was abandoned — probably after the cost was found to be greater than the returns. About 1773 the property began to be used by the Colony as a workhouse and gaol and persons con-



victed of certain crimes were confined there as were Tories during the war of the Revolution. In 1790 it was made the state prison and so continued until the prison at Wethersfield was established in 1827. At first the prison yard was surrounded by a wooden fence with sharp spikes set in the top; but in 1802 this was replaced by the present stone wall which had broken glass set in the top to aid in preventing escape. Some of the prisoners were lodged at night in the block of cells above ground which was known as "the stone Jug"; but most of them were lodged in the underground cavern. Here three cabins were built with bunks raised above the floor. Straw was supplied for them to sleep on, which was changed every eight or ten days, and blankets were supplied in cold weather. At one side in a large cell cut from the solid rock, a negro prisoner was confined, with shackles on his ankles and chained to a bolt set in the rock of the floor. In my younger days the story went around that he was kept there until his feet rotted off. This was not true; but it is easy to see how the tale originated. One day he pulled the shackles up onto his legs and could not get them down again. The consequence of the blood settling below them was that as a result both feet had to be amputated later. After this he was given more liberty above ground and walking about on his knees used to do errands for the other prisoners, sometimes outside the prison gates. The little guard house on the south-east corner of the prison took on an added interest to me after I was told by an old man who was acting as guard there that one day three prisoners dropped over the wall and started to run. He fired at them, hitting one in the heel and stopping him. The other two escaped, one of them was later captured, but the other was never heard of again. The bolt with its attached chain set in the floor of the underground cell where the negro was confined are modern additions, probably added to stimulate tourist interest. The original bolt with its iron ring to which the chain was attached, are preserved by a local collector, as is also the iron bolt 16 inches in length and one inch square which fastened the outer one of the double set of doors closing "the stone jug". The ankle shackles worn by the prisoners were made by one Griffin, probably a local smith, and bore

his name. Each was divided into two halves by a hinge. At the side of the end of one half was a tubular attachment about one and a half inches long. Secured inside of this was a tube whose inner surface carried a thread cut into the metal. This inner tube could be revolved by means of a key inserted at one end. The end of the other half bore a cut thread of the right size to fit into the tube that could be revolved. Thus by means of the key, the two halves could be screwed together and the shackle fastened.

Culprits are said to have dreaded a sentence at Newgate — and it is little wonder. Inside the walls was a busy place, for all were kept hard at work under the constant watch of guards with loaded muskets and fixed bayonets. Probably those who worked in wood were the most fortunate, for their work was varied. It ranged from turning clothespins that were five and a half inches long and an inch in diameter to repairing and perhaps building wagons and doing other repair work brought in from the outside. They are said to have also made barrels, kegs, pails and done other wood-work. The principal labor done at the prison was the making of nails. For this, iron mined at Salisbury, smelted there and rolled and then slit into nail rods, was used. These rods were then hauled to the prison to be made into nails by the prisoners. These nails are still sometimes to be found in old buildings and when pulled from the wood will be found to be free from rust and sometimes almost as bright and clean as when first made, such was the good quality of the iron used. The workshop where the nails were made was a room 88  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet long and 35 feet wide. On each side was a row of five fires where the iron was heated, with anvils and all conveniences for nail making. How many prisoners used each fire, we do not know. A wide aisle was left between the two rows of fires. At daybreak the prisoners were brought in two by two at the point of a guard's bayonet and each one shackled and chained to his block where they remained until they were returned to their lodgings at sunset. Each one was given a pail containing his rations for the day. Guards were in constant attendance and each prisoner who waited on the nail makers was constantly followed by a guard. Perhaps it was in addition to his shackles that each

one had a ring or band of iron around each ankle with a stiff bar about 16 inches in length and a chain running from this bar to his block. Some had a chain passing from this bar to a band or string around their bodies. Those who were most refractory had an additional band about their necks with a chain passing from this to a beam six or eight feet above them. In this situation they were obliged to perform their daily tasks. The daily stint for each prisoner was to make nine pounds of eight penny, 11 pounds of 10 penny and 15 pounds of 20 penny nails. There was also a nail house 16 by 20 feet in size where the finished product was kept until it was sold and perhaps the nail rods were stored until they were used. The state bought a small plot of low ground to the west of the prison buildings to be used as a burial place for such as died during their imprisonment. So low and wet was the ground that it is said the coffins sometimes had to be weighted with stones to sink them, so rapidly did the mud and water come into the open grave. Religious services were held at the prison each Sunday, usually by the minister of the Turkey Hills Congregational Church. Armed guards were present on the low rostrum which the prisoners sat facing. Townspeople frequently attended these services, particularly the young people who looked upon such attendance as quite a lark.

About 1830 the silkworm craze spread across the country. Every one would grow the silk worms, would sell the cocoons or the silk threads that they produced and gain wealth in short order. Great was the interest in the subject. The raising of silkworms in Connecticut was not a new idea, for almost a century earlier, Governor Jonathan Law had worn a suit and stockings made from silk produced in the Colony. At neither time, however, was the work continued for any great length of time. Our community was not immune to this later craze. Mulberry trees were planted on the farm near the north end of the town now owned by Judge Millard Griffin, some of which survived for half a century. A small two story house, which burned a few years ago, was also built on the premises for use in raising and caring for the silkworms. How long the business was carried on here, we do not know. There was a firm in Hartford at this time which



processed cocoons and reeled off the silk filiments from them.

Perhaps the most interesting Colonial enterprise in Turkey Hills was the manufacture of potash by Joseph Cornish, who lived on what was formerly the Hanlon farm, now owned and occupied by Waldo Bates. The Cornish Genealogy credits Joseph, who died in 1759, as being the potash maker. It is possible that he did make potash; but it is the writer's opinion that the author of that genealogy was mistaken and that his son and namesake, who succeeded to the property, was the only maker of potash. This Joseph was born in 1729 and died in 1776. In the writer's boyhood days there rested against a low bank wall in front of the old Cornish house which marked the boundary of the highway, although it was some distance from the traveled roadway, two or three old iron kettles; I would call them cauldrons rather than kettles. They were in the shape of a shallow hemisphere with a wide flat rim around the top, and my recollection is that they would hold nearly or quite a barrel. These were undoubtedly some of the potash kettles to which the younger Joseph Cornish makes reference.

In September 1765 he began an almost daily record, which he continued for six years, with the heading "Joseph Cornish his account against the Potash". Among the early items were "timber for the house", 120 feet of white pine boards, 5000 white pine shingles, hauling dirt and hauling stone. The most frequent item in his accounts was "my Self one day". In at least one month this item occurred 26 times. At first his charge for a days work was two shillings; but this was soon raised to three shillings and towards the end of the record to four shillings. He was not alone as a workman, but had a number of assistants, some of them for only a day or two at a time to do some special work. His principal helper was Elazer Rice who was in his full time employ, evidently doing farm work when not at "the potash". Another frequent helper was Zebulon Moses and another Moses Warner. The helpers were paid two shillings at first and later three shillings a day. A supply of wood was cut and later wood was frequently bought. He visited the nearby residents and purchased ashes from them, which of course were entirely

made from the burning of wood, and paid for them a regular price of six pence per bushel, entering a charge for use of his oxen, horse or horses for gathering them. Then he went further afield and bought and had ashes hauled from surrounding communities, such as frequently from Windsor, also from Poquonock, Suffield, Salmon Brook, "the Falls" and "Moortown". Apparently a full load was 40 bushels, although usually the number of bushels is not stated. Kettles were of course obtained soon after the work was begun and presumably were set up in stone foundations banked with dirt. Later he bought an "iron frame and door", presumably to close the entrance to his firepit under the kettles. The first kettles used were brought from Windsor; where they were cast does not appear. Apparently they did not stand up well in service, for some time later some kettles were taken to Suffield and sold for iron. Later kettles were brought from West Simsbury. How they came to be there is not known; but it may be that they were brought from Salisbury and were met at that point by Mr. Cornish. In 1770 he went to Salisbury to buy kettles, which presumably were cast there from iron produced at the Salisbury mines. At about the same date he paid "Left Buel" 14 pounds 10 shillings for two kettles which it is to be presumed were bought by him at Salisbury. He spent a day "setting" them. Molasses was bought and charged to the potash, the quantity not stated, also 150 pounds of "shugor" at 55 shillings per hundred and two bushels of salt. Were these required in preparing the potash? There was a charge for three pounds of tea and at another time for seven quarts of rum. These were perhaps used by those who were keeping vigil over the boiling down of the lye. How the hundreds of bushels of ashes that were bought could ever have been leached seems beyond comprehension; or how they could have been stored until they were used.

Cornish frequently paid his money into the business; he called it putting it "in stock". This was doubtless used for payment of ashes purchased and other expenses of the business. It was usually in small amounts; but in July 1770 he makes an entry of "Cash put in Stock to buy ashes not recorded" 17 pounds 14 shillings. This entry alone would



show the purchase of 700 bushels of ashes. He frequently bought "potash barrels", sometimes two or three and on one occasion as many as 30 at one time. He records the disposal of his potash from time to time; 14 barrels taken to Rocky Hill, 14 barrels to Windsor. Apparently this was a load, and it must have taken more than one pair of oxen to draw it, for potash is heavy stuff. Other "loads" went to Windsor, a load to Hartford in November 1770, another load to Hartford in June 1771 and still another in September of the same year, and other shipments to unspecified places. From the places noted, it would have been easy to ship the potash by boat to New York or elsewhere, for it seems improbable that these amounts were used at the places named. Strangely enough, there is no hint as to who was the purchaser or of the sale price per barrel. It may be that opposition by the British Government at this period to any manufacturing in America caused the work to be carried on as quietly, if not secretly as possible. He records the "Sum total" charged against the potash to the end of October 1767, or possibly it means to the end of that year, as 158 pounds 10 pence; surely a neat sum for a little over two years work and an indication that the potash must have sold for a high price, else he would not have continued the work and apparently increased his efforts towards the end of the period for which we have a record. His latest entries, in June 1772, relate to the purchase and fetching of ashes, to packing and "copering" the potash and to the payment of one half of carting the potash to Hartford. There is one final entry under date of March 14, 1775 of the payment of four shillings eight pence to Ebenezer Phelps. Did he close the business soon after June 1772, and if so, why, and why did he continue to buy ashes?

Close to the north bank of the so-called "Creamery brook" there formerly stood an old low two story building back several rods from the east side of the highway. The lower story contained a still for making cider brandy and a wooden trough from near the highway carried water from the brook to cool the worm of the still. The building was owned and the still operated by some of the Clark family. Probably no brandy was made there during the last seventy years. The second floor, which I believe was larger than the

still section, was on a level with and opened onto the higher ground at the north. It used to be strewn with barrels, most of them empty, but perhaps some of them filled. Just to the north of this was an old fashioned cider mill. Cider making time was one of the joyous occasions of the year to the youngsters, myself included. There was a pile of perhaps several hundred bushels of apples. The pile was close beside the grinding mill, leaving only room for the horse attached to a long wooden arm who went round and round reducing the apples as they were shoveled into the grinder to small fragments accompanied by much juice. This grinder, as I remember it, consisted of two upright cylinders that were grooved or notched in some manner so that the apples were ground as they dropped down between them. After being ground, they were shoveled from a box beneath in large scoops onto the press which stood just beyond the track of the horse. On the flat bed of the press, strong strips of wood perhaps four inches square and notched so as to hold them in place were built up, leaving narrow spaces between them to form a pen six or more feet square, the pen being built up as the ground apples were put in, until it was four or five feet high. Then a heavy top or cover was put on and pressure was applied. A heavy framework over two sides of the press carried two large metal screws with four holes in their enlarged tops. Into these holes of one and then the other, screw, a long pole was placed and the screws turned down to bring pressure on the ground apple beneath. A deep groove around near the outer edge of the flat bed conveyed the juice or cider to a half hogshead set partly into the ground. Every boy could dip out and drink as much of the sweet, luscious fluid as he wished or as he dared to drink. Barrels one after another were rolled up beside the half hogshead, a pail with a spout set in the bottom was set in the bunghole of the barrel, the pail was partially filled with straw to catch bits of apple that might have escaped and the cider was dipped into the pail until the barrel was filled. After this came the loading of the barrels into the wagon, the ride home and the exciting work of seeing them unloaded and carefully lowered into the cellar, there to be opened and left to go through the fomenting period — and the tired boy

partook himself to bed, let us hope for a peaceful sleep. All of this is a thing of the past. Apples are now pressed between rollers and a watery liquor which passes under the name of cider, but which is not to be compared with the old fashioned article, is extracted.

Directly in front of the building last mentioned, but standing close to the highway was the tobacco warehouse of Charles Horace Clark. This was a substantial frame building, two stories high, painted white and standing on a high brick basement. Just when it was erected, the writer does not know; but it was previous to the Civil War, although probably not long before that period. A number of cigarmakers were regularly employed, as well as other persons to handle and care for the tobacco and girls to stem the leaves. Even at this time, the cigarmakers were members of a union. The cigars that were made were packed in rather large boxes which bore a label carrying a large picture of Mr. Clark. The business was discontinued probably by or before 1880 and the building was subsequently taken down and removed elsewhere.

Some tobacco was grown here before the middle of the eighteenth century; but it probably did not become a staple crop until 1800 or perhaps a little later than that. Some farmers earlier than that grew a small plot for their own use. A little before 1840 Anson Bates became a tobacco dealer, probably the only one in the community. He bought, packed and sweated tobacco, later disposing of it to out of town and out of the state parties. He carried on the business for about twenty years. The standard variety at this time was what was called the Windsor broad leaf. About 1872 the first Havana seed, as it was called, was grown in the town. At first people looked askance at this small and thin leafed product; but it grew in popularity until it has now almost entirely supplanted the broad leaf. For a period, how long the writer does not know, when there was no tax on them, the women of many households made and sold cigars, both to the trade and to direct consumers.

There were two general stores at Turkey Hills center during the early years of the last century. Their proprietors were Appleton Robbins and Charles T. Hillyer. Their



rivalry, if any, would appear to have been only a friendly one, for Hillyer married Robbins' daughter and only surviving child. There are some notes of items sold by Hillyer, such as molasses, flour and nails, and doubtless Robbins' stock was not different. At all such stores West India rum was one of the best sellers. In general, merchants would ship such local products as corn, staves, hoop poles, fish and sometimes mules and horses and would receive in return molasses, rum and sugar. Robbins' store building was later drawn up the street a third of a mile and was used for many years as a residence by Alfred Winchel. It is still standing. Both merchants prospered and their united fortunes were much increased both by Charles T. and by his son Appleton Robbins Hillyer, who for a time succeeded his father in the store. Both removed to Hartford, where the elder man was for many years president of the Charter Oak National Bank. Appleton married Miss Datha Bushnell, who after his death used a sizable portion of this Hillyer fortune to erect a memorial to which she attached the name of Bushnell.

On the southern edge of the town, where the road running south from the center crosses the river, back a considerable distance to the east from the highway and on the bank of the river stood and perhaps still stands the building of the Cowles Manufacturing Company. From their principal product the locality acquired the name of Spoonville. Mr. Clark's History states that this company was making silver plated spoons as early as 1846 and was the first to make a success of plating. Their business was carried on during the second quarter of last century. In addition to silver spoons they made a variety of other table ware including castors, which were then in almost universal use. In those days silver was not regularly sold as a commodity as it now is, and to obtain stock the firm melted up much United States coin, particularly dollars. Many of their products were of course made of the baser metals. They did quite an extensive business and sent out agents to sell their products. Mr. Clark also says that "the manufacture of wire cards began about 1820 on the Farmington River". Apparently the only place where this could have been done was at the location and perhaps in the building later occupied by the Cowles

Manufacturing Company. This work was probably carried on by some member of the Denslow family, who apparently were then residents of the western section of Rainbow. One of the family, Almanzor Denslow, was the first person to set wire teeth in cards by machinery. As early as 1828 he had removed the business and was a "machine card maker" in Hartford and used a large dog on a treadmill to furnish his necessary power. If Denslow invented his process of setting card teeth by machinery while working at his presumed location on the bank of the Farmington River using for power the small stream which empties into the river at this point, it makes one more to add to the list of East Granby firsts — first to produce iron from ore dug in the Colony; first to manufacture steel in the country; first in the country to mint copper coins; first in the country to make a success of silver plating, and first to invent a way of setting wire card-teeth by machinery.

Later the building was evidently used as a fulling mill, for the writer recalls seeing there more than fifty years ago the wide skeleton wheel of large diameter with some of the fullers teasels still attached to it, such as are used to raise the desired nap on stocks of cloth.

Probably somewhat less than a century ago in a large building still standing on the east side of the highway about half a mile south of the center, a member of the Thompson family built wagons and perhaps carriages. Somewhat later another member of the same family who lived near there, made round wooden measures.

A short distance north of the bridge at Tariffville, on the west side of the highway, a blacksmith shop stood for many years until recently. At the center seventy-five or more years ago, Homer Fox had a blacksmith shop. He was succeeded by Thomas H. Lee, who also built wagons and did other woodwork.

Many years ago Henry A. Case had a grist and saw mill on the Farmington River at Eel Rock, where the Hartford Electric Light Company's power house now stands. Down a long driveway to the east of the east street Duane Barnard had a grist mill on a small stream. I have been told that the

brass knobs used on cattle's horns were once made there; but have never seen any evidence to support the story.

Splint baskets were sometimes made by Abner Dean; a work calling for both ingenuity and patience.

What recreations, sports or changes from the daily routine did the people of our community have? The early inhabitants probably had none. They were too busy making a living. The first mention we have of any sport is the Nimrod Club, which existed probably soon after the Revolution. It was evidently some kind of a hunting club; but just what its members aimed at (no pun intended) we do not know. In the cities the Fourth of July was commemorated almost from the first. In the 1840s it was celebrated here, and how much earlier, we do not know. Speakers were sometimes brought in from out of town. In the writer's early days the celebrations, also Sunday School and other picnics, were held in Ransellaer Pinney's grove, just south of the center. There was a permanent platform for the speaker and tables for the crowd. Swings were put up, there was a tub of lemonade prepared, and baskets of food. It was a gala time for all of the children. Sometimes a picnic and clam bake was held at "The Ponds", as the Congamond Lakes were usually designated. A slightly hollowed base of stones had been made. A fire was kept burning on these until they were thoroughly heated; then the ashes were cleared away, clams were poured onto the hot stones, followed by oysters, then green corn in the husks and sweet potatoes, and if I am not mistaken, occasionally some lobsters. The whole was covered with a tarpaulin and left to be cooked by the heat of the base stones. Oh how good every thing tasted. Later came the trip around the ponds on the little steamboat that plied their waters. Occasionally there would be a family party to the shore or to the grounds that are still used on the bank of the Connecticut River near the north border of Suffield. It perhaps was around 1840 that the game of wicket ball was quite popular. This was revived for a short time in the 1880s. There were dances; but these were frowned on by the church people as recently as the 1820s.

Cattle shows were held as early as the 1820s, and in those days they were really cattle shows. Steers were matched



there and cattle bought and sold. Later fairs of farm and household products were added. Turkey Hills was one of the first, possibly the very first, places in the state to hold cattle shows.

Turning to the literary side; there was a Library Association here previous to the Revolution, doubtless as early as the 1760s. Probably during the second or third quarter of last century there was another Library Association. Its books were kept at the home of Bradley Perkins, next door to the present library building. How long either of these libraries existed we do not know. In the first half of last century there were one and probably two literary clubs or societies in the community. One of these was the Newtonian Lyceum which was organized November 1, 1833, its object being "the moral and intilectual improvement of its members and the more general diffusion of knowledge". Meetings were held at frequent intervals until February 25, 1848, when at an annual meeting the treasurer reported a balance of twelve cents in the treasury and officers were elected for the coming year and the record ends abruptly. Among the 32 who signed the membership roll were Newton W. Thrall, Morton Cornish, Wal(ter) O. Lewis, Milt(on) M. Owen, Isaac P. Owen, Richard H. Phelps, W( ) H. Bull, Drayton Hillyer, O(liver) H. Barker, Elmore Clark, J(ames) R. Viets, C(harles) P. Clark, George C. Owen, Charles C. Holcomb, Samuel A. Clark, Thomas Scott Gould, Charles O. Cornish, Oliver R. Holcomb, Chauncey E. Viets, Alfred J. Sheldon, John J. Viets, Isaac W. Thompson, Hosea Moore, D(wight) T. Skinner, I. W. Denison, E. J. Cornish, Henry Austin, W. ( ) Loomis, Hiram C. Holcomb. These appear to have been the original members; others were admitted from time to time. At nearly every meeting a subject was selected to be debated at the following meeting. A number of members, usually eight, were assigned to sustain the affirmative and a similar number for the negative. Perhaps the most spirited debate was on December 29, 1837, when the finances of the country were in a very unsettled condition. The subject was "Would it be expedient at the present time for Congress to establish a National Bank". All members present, as well as those assigned to the sub-

ject, took part in the debate; but a decision could not be reached and the meeting was adjourned. At the following meeting the subject was resumed and after further debate, was decided in the negative. The members had high aspirations, for at one time they considered the publication of a newspaper; but no action was finally taken upon the matter.

In the 1870s there was a reading club whose members met and took turns in reading aloud. There were occasional singing schools. One thing worthy of mention are the old stone walls still occasionally to be seen in the back lots. They were laid up with many of the stones tilted, so that the wall was very open, giving it an almost lacelike effect and making it look as if the least wind would destroy it. Yet these walls have stood for two centuries. Some leading citizens, who may have had a faculty for the work, would hire out by the day to their neighbors to build these walls.

The United States Government in 1836 distributed a considerable sum of money among the several states in proportion to their population. This distribution was not a gift; but was more in the nature of a loan, as the right was reserved to recall the money at any time. It was a condition of its receipt that not less than one half of the income derived from the money should be used for educational or school purposes. This money was officially known as the "Town Deposit Fund". The states in turn allocated the money, under the same conditions that it was received, among the several towns and each town was expected to withdraw its share from the office of the state treasurer and itself care for it. Some towns, however, including Granby, did not withdraw their share, but allowed it to remain in the office of the treasurer and received from him annually the income derived from it. Granby's share was \$7,019.26. When the town of East Granby was incorporated, this sum was divided between the two towns on the basis of population. East Granby's share was \$2,083.84, and this also was allowed to remain in the office of the treasurer; but as the income received from it through that source was very small, it was withdrawn in 1892. The town treasurer was directed to loan it to the town, which he did upon a note bearing interest at the rate of five percent, and at the



end of his term of office duly passed the note along to his qualified successor. For a number of years thereafter at each annual town meeting of the voters of East Granby, an Agent of the Town Deposit Fund was elected. His nominal duties were very simple, as they consisted of collecting from the town treasurer the interest on the note given by the town and paying it back to him to be expended for school purposes. After a few years the name and election of an Agent for the Town Deposit Fund was omitted from the ticket of the annual town election, and it seems probable that today very few of the voters know of this possible obligation against the town. The present whereabouts of the note is not known to the writer. The Second School Society of Granby which, so far as educational matters are concerned, was the predecessor of the town of East Granby, are both believed at least while the Fund was in the hands of the state treasurer, to have used the whole of the income for school purposes.

On the occasion of the celebration in 1931 of the one hundredth anniversary of the erection of the present church building, the writer read a sketch of the ecclesiastical society and the church, which was subsequently published. The records of the church from 1776, which are the earliest extant, to 1858 have also been printed. Because of these publications, no account of the church or society are here given. One item of interest may be added. The first bell of the church was raised on the twenty-second of April 1831, and was first struck on by Joel Clark, and was first tolled just one week later for the death of a child of Jesse Clark.

The building of a house in the early days was a very different matter from building today. First the timbers for the frame must be cut and allowed to season, perhaps for a year. Then bricks for the chimney must be had. A farmer who had a clay bank on his farm would make his own bricks, which must have been quite a process. The location of some of these individual brickyards may still be seen in the town. Then came the digging of the cellar and following that the building in the cellar-hole of a large stone foundation for the chimney. This must be of considerable size, as the chimney with its various fireplaces and flues took up considerable

space. The chimney was usually laid up with clay in place of mortar, as lime for mortar was not to be had easily; only the top part above the roof being laid with mortar. The framing timbers were shaped with a broadaxe and the mortices made with the rude chisels and "pod augers" in use at that period. A sawmill was established in or easily accessible to every town at an early date. Probably the early Turkey Hills settlers had the benefit of such a mill; but if not, they were obliged to saw by hand, the boards that they needed. When doing this a log was fastened in position above a pit and with one man standing on it and another in the pit below, the log was slowly sawed into boards. Sometimes short lengths of logs were rived into shingles or short clapboards. This was done by splitting them to the desired size with a froe. This was a tool with a long knifelike blade having a handle at right angle to the blade. The neighbors were invited to take part in raising the building and few missed the opportunity, and with the eatables and drinkables that were dispensed, a good time was had by all — sometimes too good a one. All of the iron-work, hinges, latches, etc. were fashioned by the local blacksmith, as were also the nails until they were made at Newgate for all of the nearby country. Nails were scarce and valuable and even used and bent ones were carefully saved and straightened to be used again. Household furnishings were few and the modern housewife would be at a loss to get along with them. Wooden platters, plates and spoons were in common use. All cooking was done by the fireplace fire. Pots were hung on the crane by hooks and trammels, baking was done under a large sheet metal cover on which hot coals were piled. Some meats were cooked before the fire in what was in later years called a "tin kitchen", the back of which served to help hold the heat and in which the meat was placed on a spit that could be turned from time to time. At night the embers were covered and in the morning enough fire usually remained to again start it going for the day. In case the fire was lost, it was necessary either to go to a neighbor's and "borrow fire" or to renew it by using flint and steel to light tinder and then small bits of wood.

One who was perhaps the wealthiest citizen in the com-





drawn to remove this outer covering. The flax fibers were then ready to be carded by combing it between two hand cards set with many short wire teeth which straightened the fibers and made it ready for spinning. Every family had a big wheel and a small wheel on which the actual spinning was done. There were also other articles, such as a reel, which frequently had a "click" by which a talley of the number of yards wound on it could be kept. After the cloth had been woven it was made up, usually by the women of the household, but occasionally by a local tailoress. The cloth was home dyed, the only boughten color being indigo. Other colors were home made, butternut, peach leaves and certain wild berries being used, and the "dyepot" frequently stood in the corner of the fireplace — about which nothing more can well be said here. People dressed warmly, the women wearing many skirts. What we now designate as underwear was entirely unknown, as were also certain articles of women's apparel. In cold weather and possibly also during other seasons, the formality of undressing before retiring was omitted. This leads to a mention of the common custom of "bundling" by the young people. When a young man came to call upon the daughter of the house and the older people were ready to cover the fire at an early hour and retire, the young couple would get into a bed without undressing and, theoretically at least, with a sheet between them where they could lie and talk as long as they wished. This was considered perfectly proper and it is said that the girl's mother would come and see that they were comfortable and tuck them in.

The food eaten was almost entirely produced on the farm. Neat cattle, swine and sheep were raised for eating, as were also fowl and geese, although the latter were chiefly kept for the sake of their feathers which were periodically plucked from them. Every cellar was well stocked with probably a barrel of salt pork, another of beef and perhaps hams and shoulders in a third, being salted before being smoked. There may also have been a supply of shad salted for later use and perhaps also some salted lamprey eels. Probably there were barrels of cider and of apples, piles of vegetables, maybe a keg of boiled cider apple sauce, a jar of salted butter



and possibly a keg of soft soap. In cold weather meat was frequently swapped between neighbors when butchering had been done at different times.

Taxes in the early days were low, except on the occasion of some special event like the building of a church or school-house, although as money was very scarce they may have seemed relatively as high as those of the present day. They were laid in great detail. The number of acres of cultivated land, of pasture and of woodland were separately listed and taxed as were also the kind and ages of neat cattle. Another item that seems odd to us today was the listing and taxation of "heads"; every male of eighteen or over was rated at a certain sum the same as live stock, perhaps eighteen pounds, and a tax was paid on that amount. Thus as the tax rate varied from year to year, so did the personal tax paid by each man in the family. The earliest United States tax paid directly by individuals was in the 1790s by means of embossed stamps on certain documents. This tax was laid and collected statewise, each stamp bearing the name of the state in which it was issued.

There were numerous local names in or adjacent to Turkey Hills, many of which are now almost forgotten. Among these are Spoonville, Eel Rock, Hatchet Hill, Vinyard Notch or The Notch, Scotland, The Falls, Griffin's Lordship, Black House, Metukal, Conscience Town, Oil City, Wigwam Bars and Copper Hill.

The East Granby post office was established February 19, 1820. Previous to that time, mail for Turkey Hills residents had been addressed to Granby and in much earlier days even occasionally to Hartford. The records of the Post Office Department give the name of the first East Granby post-master as Chauncey Baker, a name which the writer has never met with on the local records, and which seems like an error; and was probably meant for Chauncey Barker.

The first physician of whom we have any record in Turkey Hills or its environment is Dr. John Viets. He is presumed to have been born and educated in Germany and possessed a library of about twenty-five volumes printed in the language of that country. He appeared in New York about 1700 and his marriage there appears on the records of the Dutch

Church. About 1710 he came to Simsbury where he spent the remainder of his life, dying there in 1723. Many descendants of his bearing the Viets name are to be found in this section. The exact site of his home is not known; but it was about a mile north of "The Falls", the site of the present village of Tariffville, and a little to the westward. This would make it about at the line of the boundary between the later societies of Salmon Brook and Turkey Hills. In addition to being a doctor and presumably a farmer, he had a linseed-oil mill.

The next physician, and the first one of whom it can be positively stated that he resided in Turkey Hills, is Dr. Samuel Higley. He was born in Simsbury about 1687 and is believed to have been lost at sea in 1735, the year in which his will was made, although the will was not probated until two years later. He received his professional training under two Hartford doctors, Thomas Hooker and Samuel Mather, for two years in "Physick and Chyrurgary" and was formally admitted by the General Assembly to practice in Connecticut in May 1714, after having spent the previous winter practising medicine in Woodbridge, New Jersey. With his profession he combined his scientific pursuits of making steel and mining and coining copper. Previous to becoming a physician, he had taught school for three years. Doctor Higley left a widow Abigail, a son Jonathan and two daughters.

Doctor John Howe evidently settled in Turkey Hills at an early age and there married Lydia Gay and resided in the house next south of the Gay homestead. The house disappeared long ago; but the writer remembers the "Howe barn" which marked the location. He died in 1787 at the age of 35. His wife survived him, dying in 1806 aged 59. Their two children died at an early age, Lydia in 1784 aged eight months and a son a month after his father, aged two years. Nothing is known of his antecedents or whence he came, even by later relatives in his wife's family. A possible clue appears in the inscription on the headstone of his son which calls him "Sir William Pindar", son of Doctor John Howe. Did the doctor belong to some titled family of England? The little hand scales that he used to weigh his medicines was in existence only a few years ago and possibly is still preserved by some member of his wife's family. Its

balancing arm was about eight inches long and hung from each end by three small chains was a shallow metal pan about two inches in diameter. The whole fitted snugly into a shallow wooden case.

A long time physician in Turkey Hills was Dr. Eliphalet Buck, who died in 1844 at the age of 78. During his early career at least, one of the most common remedies for every ill was bleeding. Some say that Washington was practically bled to death at his last illness. One form of bleeding lancet had three blades which folded into a handle like the blades of a penknife. These blades were of brass; but at one side near the end of the blade was a very sharp steel point about half an inch long, which resembled the point of a modern paper scratcher with which the cut for bleeding was made. The three points differed considerably in size. At the occasion of his last illness Matthew Griswold, the local rhymester wrote of Buck that

The doctor came and looked him over

And said, poor Buck, he'll ne'er recover.

Then continuing Griswold represents himself as peeking through the keyhole and seeing Buck in bed

With head as big as any kettle

And eyes as round as any beetle.

Doctor Chester Hamlin, a native of Farmington and for some forty years a practitioner in East Granby until his death in 1872 at the age of 77, may be considered the successor to Dr. Buck. He is the first doctor that the writer remembers. In fact, he was my physician before I had opportunity to remember anything. He was an "old school" doctor and used to prescribe "blue pills" and other powerful medicines, although not all of his medicines were of that nature. One who for some time had been his man of all work, related many years later that he had made many ryebread pills at the doctor's direction. It is to be presumed that the bread received the proper medication either before or after it was made into pills. Like other doctors of the period, he also pulled teeth. The "key" that he used is still extant. It consists of a shaft of metal about the size of a lead pencil and six inches long. Across one end is the handle. Near the other end is a small projection. In line with this



and moving at right angles to the shaft is a loose metal hook held by a screw that extends up the end of the shaft. This hook is just large enough to go over the projection on the shaft. When the projection was placed on one side of a tooth and the edge of the hook on the other side, a slight twist would give a grip on the tooth that with a pull was bound to remove it. It was a cruel instrument. Accompanying it was a small metal instrument with a sharp beveled edge that could be used if necessary to cut the flesh away from the tooth that a better hold on it might be obtained. When vaccinating the doctor used, as was the custom, for his vaccine the scab from the vaccination scar of another person. Occasionally this carried some lingering poison with it. Many years after his death, in repairing a shed that was attached to the house where the doctor had lived, next south of the store, parts of two different skulls were found tucked away in its loft. One was the lower part from which the top had been sawed off. The other the upper part from which the lower part had been sawed off. A slight nick in the otherwise smooth sawed edge may indicate that its owner met a violent death and that an autopsy was held and his brain made the subject of study as the result. The doctor was postmaster in the writer's early days. The post-office was kept in the small building next south of his residence and he was probably assisted by his daughter. The office was usually kept open evenings; but the doctor refused to keep it open Saturday evenings and carried the remaining mail to his house, where it would be delivered to any one who called there for it.

Thus much of the Society of Turkey Hills and its successor the Town of East Granby. What is here set down cannot actually be called an Historical Sketch, but it gives many facts relating to the community some of which will, the writer trusts, be both new and of interest to some of you.





























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